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Pickard · A Brief Reply to Thomas Bewley
1867

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A BRIEF REPLY
TO
THOMAS BEWLEY'S PAMPHLET
ENTITLED
"AN INQUIRY INTO THE RIGHT PLACE AND
AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE."

By DANIEL PICKARD

"DO NOT ERR, MY BELOVED BRETHREN."—JAS. I. 16.
"PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—I THESS. V. 21.

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It is due to the reader to state, that since the following pages were written, I have had some correspondence with the Author of "An Inquiry," &c., respecting the issue and the purport of his pamphlet; and that he has courteously owned the right of publication for this Reply.

D. P.

3rd Month, 1867.

Moorland Road, Leeds.

A BRIEF REPLY

ETC. ETC.

HAVING lately received through the post, a controversial pamphlet by Thomas Bewley, entitled, "An Inquiry into the right place and authority of Holy Scripture," but which is "*printed for private circulation only*," I have felt an engagement of mind to raise a protest against *such* an issue from the press, upon such a subject; as well as to make a few remarks, by way of stricture on, and reply to, some of its contents.

"The right place and authority of Holy Scripture," being in every sense a *public* question, and not a question specially of private interest, or of local importance only, it would seem manifestly due to all concerned, that any writer engaged thereon, should make his offering in the open field of publication. In the present instance, the Author may have had reasons for issuing his pamphlet through private channels, which to himself may seem fair; but I confess, that its *so appearing*, had to my mind too much the savour and manner of those, who "privily bring in" contrary doctrine.

The Author is, moreover, a member of our religious Society, and making use of his *membership*, in the work of controverting and laying waste the long-established principles of the People he is thus joined to, on the important

subject in question. Whether this, by means of a privately circulated treatise, be a just and candid form of procedure, I would entreat him again to consider.

On reading the pamphlet through, my impression is clear, that, were our members generally to receive with credence the propositions it contains, there would then be little or nothing to protect us from a further relapse from our original persuasion and profession, into outward observances;—to an outward form of Baptism; an outward Communion of bread and wine; and to the dry and literal bonds of a school-made and salaried ministry.

In addressing himself, on page 4,* to the subject of inquiry, "What is their right place, and how are we to ascertain where that right place is?" the Author proceeds with this untenable and comfortless assertion:—"It must be manifest to all that we have no means of discovering this, except from the Holy Scriptures themselves;"—forgetting the precious truth which Barclay has well stated, that it is "by the inward testimony of the Spirit we do alone truly know them." Now if we cannot truly know them, but by the inward testimony of the Spirit, it is plain that we cannot rightly estimate them as to place and authority, but by the same good rule and guide.

"The object therefore of this paper," (adds T. B.) "is to investigate, what is the authority, what is the 'right place' they assign to themselves;" and attached to this, is a note at the bottom of the same page, where he also says, "It will be admitted that there *has been* a period in our history in which these inestimable writings have not had their *right place* assigned to them amongst us." As this statement is thus given, *devoid of date or documentary proof*, it is obvious that it may be perniciously applied according

* The references here given are to the edition of Thomas Bewley's pamphlet printed by R. T. White, of Dublin.

to the reader's prejudice, to the *very best period* of our history: and do not the writer's further remarks in the same note, and in the same pamphlet, show a disposition in himself so to apply it?

On page 5, we find the Author approximating nearer to the testimony of Truth, (though he accords it the second place,) by saying, "Let it be distinctly borne in mind in all that follows, that * * * * it is only by the help of the Holy Spirit that we can truly comprehend and believe the truths contained in this revelation of the Divine will, and that we ever stand in need of his enlightening power rightly to appreciate them." Again on page 6, "The preparation of the heart for the reception of Divine truth, is only of the Lord. It is by his Holy Spirit alone, that these truths can be brought home and savingly applied to the soul."

Now, when we find "in all that follows," that the only competitor with which the Author contends for "place and authority" on behalf of the Scriptures, is the *inward testimony of the Spirit of Truth*; does he not by the quotations last given overthrow the drift of his own argument? For if it be, as in truth it is, that every candid reader of Holy Writ is dependent on the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, for a just interpretation and application of its contents; then the latter, and not the former, is the *primary rule* of faith and manners; according to the well proved testimony of Robert Barclay and all our early Friends. The Scriptures are a concurrent and secondary guide.

On pages 6 and 7, it is said, "As the testimony of Holy Scripture, in reference to the authority and right place they *assign to themselves*, consists of a variety of isolated passages scattered throughout the Old and New Testaments, it may be interesting and instructive to bring some of them together, in order to form a just estimate of the aggregate value of the evidence they afford." And the first quotation

given, is from 2 Timothy iii. 15-17, on which the Author makes this singular remark: "It may be that the bringing these so prominently forward alone (in our public documents, &c.,) has unintentionally tended to depress our value of, and withdraw our attention from many others of equal, or even of more importance." The passages *then* cited and dwelt upon by Thomas Bewley, are in the following order:—

Deut. vi. 4-9.—"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God *is* one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes."

Deut. xxx. 11-14.—"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it *is* not hidden from thee, neither *is* it far off. It *is* not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither *is* it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

Rom. x. 6-8.—"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*;) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word *is* nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach."

Psalms i. 2.—"But his delight *is* in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

Psalms xix. 7, 8.—"The law of the Lord *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord *is* pure, enlightening the eyes."

Prov. xiii. 13.—"Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded."

Prov. vi. 23.—“For the commandment *is* a lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life.”

Psalms cxix. 11.—“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. 14.—I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, * * * * 16.—I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word. 24.—Thy testimonies also *are* my delight *and* my counsellors. 50.—* * * * thy word hath quickened me. 93.—I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me. 99.—I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation. 105.—Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. 130.—The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”

Isaiah viii. 20.—“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them.”

Hosea iv. 6.—“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”

Rom. x. 17.—“So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

John xx. 30, 31.—“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

1 John v. 13.—“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

1 John ii. 1.—“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.”

1 John i. 4.—“And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”

1 John v. 10.—“* * he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.”

1 John ii. 24.—“Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.”

Luke i. 3, 4.—“It seemed good to me * * * * to write unto thee in order that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”

2 Peter iii. 1, 2.—“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.”

2 Peter iii. 15-17.—“Our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

1 Cor. xiv. 37.—“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.”

Rev. xxii. 18, 19.—“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.”

Rom. xv. 4.—“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

Heb. iii. 7.—“Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, * * * *”

Rev. i. 2.—“Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 19.—Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.”

2 Peter i. 21.—“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Rev. ii. 7.—“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

1 Tim. iv. 13.—“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 15.—* * Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.”

Acts xviii. 28.—“For he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.”

Rom. iii. 20.—“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no

flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin."

Rom. vii. 7.—"What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

Matt. xxii. 29.—"Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, * * "

John v. 46, 47.—"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

Luke xxiv. 44-47.—"These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoveth Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, * * *"

John xiv. 21, 23, 24.—"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. * * * If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: * * *"

John xvii. 17, 19, 20.—"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. * * * And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; * * *"

Ephes. i. 13.—"In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."

John v. 24.—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10.—"But he answered and said, It is written, * * * It is written again, * * * for it is written * * *"

Luke iv. 4, 8, 12.—"And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, * * * for it is written, * * * It is said, * * *"

Luke iii. 2.—"The word of God came unto John * * * in the wilderness."

Mark vii. 6-13.—"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people

honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. * * * * Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; * * * * But ye say, * * * * making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: * * *

Luke xvi. 27-31.—“ * * * * They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. * * * * If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

Many of the quotations thus advanced are in themselves valuable evidence, and convincingly prove that the Scriptures of Truth were given forth from time to time by the inspiration of God; are of Divine authority to those who possess them; eminently profitable for the ends designed in them; and that as writings, they are superior in place and importance to all others. But in my apprehension, the citation of them is all waste labour, if it is intended thereby to prove the drift of the Author's argument, viz.—that the Scriptures anywhere designate *themselves* as the “Word of God,” or that they are superior in place and power to the inward testimony of the Spirit of Truth. And in order to test more definitely Thomas Bewley's argument in this direction, I would suggest to the reader to go consecutively through the passages referred to, and try the reading of them with the term “the Scriptures” in all those places where the terms “law,” “gospel,” “truth,” “word,” “commandment,” “record,” “statutes,” “precepts,” “testimonies,” &c., are used. For instance, were either of those two remarkable passages, Deut. xxx. 14, or Rom. x. 8, rendered thus, “The Scriptures are very nigh thee, in thy heart, and in thy mouth;” how would it *alter* and *diminish* the sense of what is there written! The Author in his observations on the last of these two passages, denies that

“*the word* here spoken of by Paul is the immediate teaching of the Holy Spirit;”—and speaks very slightly of “the inspeaking word,”—“the light within,”—“the inward and spiritual appearance,” &c. Alas! for the world, we may well say, if these Scriptures have no application to the inward teaching of the Spirit of God! Where was the Word, by which Enoch lived, and pleased God? Was it not the “word of faith” nigh in the heart? And where was the Word that instructed Moses, before he became the first Scripture writer; and which sustained the patriarchs and all the holy men that lived before his time? And has the gracious Creator of the human family no word of utterance or communication by his Spirit within them, to those vast numbers who do not yet possess the Scriptures? Alas! that men by their finite reason, should attempt to bind and limit the mysterious and holy operations of the Spirit of the Lord.

In the 19th and the 119th Psalms, from which several quotations are taken by Thomas Bewley, with the view of specially applying if not of limiting them to the Mosaic Scriptures; it is surely not the “recorded law” only, nor even *primarily*, as there written, which is spoken of as efficacious to “convert the soul.” Neither is it “the recorded law” only, to which the Psalmist alludes when he says, “Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee;” “Thy word hath quickened me,” &c.; but I believe all these experiences thus testified of, have a special and primary reference to the lively operations, the testimony and living witness of the Spirit of God *within*;—not to the exclusion, by any means, but to the full adoption, of that which stands on visible record in the Scriptures of Truth.

The writer of “An Inquiry,” &c. would even infer, on page 14, that “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,”

is an outwardly "recorded law," and not a law inwardly and individually revealed.

On page 16, upon that passage "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" he would also too much limit and confine *his own* and *our* experience of it to the "reading of the *record* of the word," as he styles it, or by hearing the same preached and expounded to us. Now those faithful servants and people of God,—Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Job, with many others of their day, were eminently taught by, and heard the Word of the Lord, before a line of the Scriptures had been written, that we know of. It was by this spiritual testimony and hearing, (administered at times in Divine condescension through the outward senses,) that Abraham, the father of all that believe, received his faith. And are the children of the faith of Abraham debarred from hearing of the same heavenly kind? I verily believe, not; but that God in his mercy has fulfilled to thousands, and will yet fulfil, his promise to those that fear him, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," [2 Cor. vi. 16;] "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." [Heb. viii. 10.]

On page 24, the Author goes so far as to say that our Saviour "in one of his discourses calls them" (id est, the Scriptures) "the word of God." Here he undoubtedly attempts what he afterwards condemns in Barclay,—"*to prove too much.*" In the discourse specified, our Saviour describes one of the ten commandments, "Honour thy father and mother," &c., as "the word of God," which the Pharisees and Scribes, by their traditions, had made of none effect. And whether it is right to reason and conclude from this, that there and then by the same declaration, the Lord gave this title to the Scriptures as a book, let any candid mind be judge.

The detail of argument interspersed with these quotations, may be described at the best as but a begging of the question. And after the enumeration of them, together with several other quotations in a copious note, on pages 11, 12, and 13;—the Author sums up this part of his treatise by the following paragraph:—

“Having now set forth some of the information Holy Scripture gives us respecting itself; the object for which it was promulgated; the work which it is designed to effect; and the duty of making ourselves accurately acquainted with its contents; how can we come to any other conclusion, than that it is not only the revelation of the Divine will to man, to set clearly and fully before him the way of that salvation which comes by the Lord Jesus Christ, but that it is the only means in the Divine appointment by which we are entitled to expect we can obtain that knowledge? Is not this setting the Scriptures in their right place?”

Here we are come to the limit of his gospel. Is it the Gospel of Christ? Is it that which is preached, and to be preached to every creature? Or is it not rather, like taking the moon to extinguish the sun? Hath our gracious Creator *no means* of communicating to the souls of mankind, the knowledge of salvation, but through a literal medium; no means of conveying the blessings of life eternal, the precious benefits of our Saviour's death, except by that which has been outwardly written relating thereto? Without dogmatizing to the extent of T. B.'s pamphlet, as to what we are “entitled” or are not “entitled to expect;”—which is wholly unnecessary;—we freely and fully own that the Scriptures of Truth are of inestimable value to those who rightly receive them;—“an advantage every way” unto those nations and people, where they are in free circulation;—that they are a declaration of the Lord's gracious

dealings, and of his Divine will to man; a most eminent means in the Divine appointment whereby we obtain a knowledge of the truth, and have a record thereof preserved. But it is altogether unnecessary, bigoted, and contrary to their own testimony, to say as does this Author, that Holy Scripture is "*the only* means in the Divine appointment by which we are entitled to expect we can obtain that knowledge."

A large answer to the above quoted paragraph may be given in the short, but pregnant language of George Fox: "That which gives the knowledge of the true God, is the Spirit that gave forth the Scriptures; for the Pharisees that had the Scriptures, knew not God."*

The apostle Paul, before his conversion under the immediate voice of Christ, was doubtless well versed in the Scriptures then extant, in a legal and literal sense, and with conscience towards God; but becoming thenceforward acquainted with the immediate teaching of the Spirit of Christ, and obedient thereto, he was brought to understand them spiritually, and in their application to the coming of Christ in the flesh;—to his departing also in the flesh, and coming again in Spirit. Thus he became an able minister of the new Covenant, and was also qualified to write sundry epistles to the Churches of Christ, which are now justly accounted and esteemed by all true believers as of kindred authority and standing with the Scriptures written by Moses, by Ezra, David, Solomon, the Prophets and Evangelists.

The remaining part of Thos. Bewley's treatise is mainly occupied by an attack upon one of the most famous passages of Robt. Barclay's Apology; and it would seem as if the former part of the treatise were introductory to it. "There

* "Priests' and Professors' Principles, and the Quakers' Answers to them:" page 264.

is a matter" (he says) "closely connected with the subject of this paper, which it is needful to advert to, and which appears to have had a tendency to induce many amongst us to 'set the Scriptures *below* their right place.' I refer to the words of R. Barclay, in the 3rd Proposition of his Apology, where he attempts to prove Holy Scripture to be but a '*secondary rule*.'" The words are:—

"They are only a declaration of the fountain and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate and primary rule of faith and manners. Yet because they give a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a *secondary rule*, subordinate to the Spirit from which they have all their excellency and certainty." And,—"*The Spirit is the primary rule of faith and manners.*" *

Upon this, R. Barclay's valuable testimony, T. B. remarks:—"It may be well doubted, if there be as many lines in any other work by a member of our Religious Society, which have had a more injurious effect on our own members, or which have tended more to depreciate our Society and its principles in the estimation of other Christian believers than these. What! the revelation of the will of God to man, a secondary rule!"

Stop! Thomas Bewley; and thoughtful reader, pause! Be candid, and be fair! See how by changing Barclay's words, "*the Scriptures*," to T. B's, "*the revelation of the will of God to man*," the latter aims against him a hard, unjust,

* The paragraph in the Apology, from which I apprehend the shorter quotation is taken, is as follows (Prop. III., Sect. 2.):—"If by the Spirit we can only come to the true knowledge of God; if by the Spirit we are to be led into all truth, and so be taught of all things; then the Spirit and not the Scriptures, is the foundation and ground of all truth and knowledge, and the primary rule of faith and manners:—

But the first is true, therefore also the last."

and dexterous blow! Barclay never said "the revelation of the will of God to man" is a secondary rule; and it is obviously unfair for any man to charge him with so doing. R. B. devoutly and sincerely believed, together with all his cotemporary brethren in the Truth, that "the revelation of the will of God to man" is, in a primary manner, given by his blessed Spirit and Light within us, and in a secondary, or instrumental manner, by the Holy Scriptures without us. In thus singling out Robt. Barclay for such an attack upon, and perversion of, his plain meaning, I feel safe in saying that the Author has not exempted from the same misapprehension and injustice, either George Fox, William Penn, or any other of the doctrinal writers of that day, who abode in unity with Friends. I believe there was not one of them of any note, but that would have fully assented to and approved the language thus taken from Barclay's Apology. George Fox, on the very point in question, says, [Journal, vol. II,* page 141:]—"One of the Priests undertook to prove 'that the Scriptures are the only rule of life,' whereupon, after I had plunged him about his proof, I had a fit opportunity to open unto them, the right and proper service and excellency of the Scriptures; and also to shew that the Spirit of God, which was given to every one to profit withal * * * is the most fit, proper, and universal *Rule*, which God hath given to all mankind to rule, direct, govern, and order their lives by." [See also Appendix for more testimonies from the writings of Friends.]

T. B. further queries, page 27;—"Was that law which was delivered to the people of Israel from Mount Sinai but a secondary rule to them? If not, how can that higher and holier law of light and life which superseded it be so to us?" Here, again, by a mis-use of terms, the Author

* Leeds Edition, 1852.

would apparently have us suppose Robt. Barclay saying, the Christian's "higher and holier law of light and life which superseded it" is but a secondary rule. In order to be consistent with his course of argument, T. B. should have written to this effect, "Are the records, precepts, and epistles, written in the New Testament, but a secondary rule to us?" For the *law of light and life* is evidently spiritual and inward in its operations; according to the sayings of our blessed Lord:—"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." And,—"If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

Robt. Barclay in distinguishing between the law and the gospel, perspicuously says, "Herein doth the *law* and the *gospel* differ, in that the *law*, being outwardly written brings under *condemnation*, but hath not *life* in it to *save*; whereas the *gospel*, as it declares and makes manifest the evil, so being an inward powerful thing, it gives power also to obey, and deliver from the evil. Hence it is called *εὐαγγέλιον*, which is, *glad tidings*. The *law* or *letter* which is without us, *kills*; but the *gospel*, which is the *inward* spiritual law, gives *life*; for it consists not so much in words as in virtue." Apology: Proposition III., Sect. 2. See also, Sect. 7.

On page 28, the Author says:—"The position of Barclay is a striking illustration of the way a zealous advocate falls at times into error by attempting to prove too much; and it is remarkable that he, generally an acute reasoner, did not perceive the fallacy in his statement. He does not appear to be conscious of the very obvious distinction between the *rule* and the *maker of the rule*." In reply to which I would say:—neither has Thos. Bewley perceived the fallacy in his statement. For by mis-stating Robt. Barclay's statement, he finds a fallacy, (of his own making) but not otherwise; as is before shewn.

“The ruler, he who makes the rule,” (continues T. B.) “is doubtless primary, above all, but surely *he* cannot with any propriety of language be called a *rule*. Nor indeed is he a rule, though the maker of it, any more than he is a *law* because he makes it.” * * * * * “So the Holy Spirit through whose inspiration the rule—Holy Scripture—was given, may, with some degree of propriety, be termed the Ruler, but it seems a painful perversion of language to call Him a rule.” In reply to this form of argument it may be briefly stated, that as one of the Psalmists says of God:—“For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our *guide* even unto death,” it can be no “perversion” either of heart or language to esteem his Holy Spirit as our *rule*; and to walk thereby. That the Spirit of God and of Christ is a *rule*, yea, **THE RULE** of life to his people, the ground and spring of all true order, and of gifts in his church, by the inward operations, holy guidance, teachings, and renewings thereof, is a truth abundantly proved in the Apostle Paul’s epistles, without looking further. See more particularly the following:—

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of

God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Romans viii., 1-17.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Romans viii., 26, 27.

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations,

but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. xii., 3-13.

"This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Galatians v., 16-18.

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Galatians vi., 16.

"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." Philippians iii., 16.

On page 29, we find for the first time in the course of the pamphlet, an admission from the Author, that a revelation of the will of God may be immediately conveyed to an individual mind; and he reasons thus—that whether mediately or immediately conveyed, "it must in either

case be a primary rule to him; and as a responsible being, he will have in either case to render an account of his obedience or disobedience." From the substance of this argument there is no particular occasion to dissent; for the Holy Spirit working on the heart and mind of man, either by applying some Scripture truth, or otherwise, is then, as the primary rule and ruler in operation, obedience to which is life. But the term "secondary rule," as applied to the Scriptures, (in themselves considered,) is surely not derogatory thereto in experience like this.

On page 30, Thos. Bewley further says:—"It is not a little curious that Barclay does not appear to have seen the contradiction between the position laid down in the passage already quoted, and his subsequent admission,—‘that we are very willing that all our doctrines be tried by the Scriptures, and that whatever doctrine is contrary to this testimony, may be rejected as false;’ and also, ‘that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and received as a delusion of the devil.’ Is not this statement a direct contradiction of what is previously quoted, that the Scriptures are not to be esteemed as ‘the adequate and primary rule of faith and manners?’ If we allow ‘that all our doctrines be tried by the Scriptures,’ then they are the ultimate test and *primary*. How can that which is the absolute test of all doctrines and practices be called a *secondary rule*? That rule *must be primary*, when all alleged communications from the Spirit are to be tested by it."

"There possibly may be some, who would think it more judicious to allow this grave error of Barclay quietly to drop out of sight, instead of thus exposing and refuting it, especially because there are now comparatively few prepared to defend it. But would not such a course be

altogether unwise? It is often necessary not only to set forth a great truth, but also to expose a pernicious error. In the present case it appears especially necessary to do so, because Barclay's position has been, and still is, recognized as the *official* belief of our Religious Society. It was, until the edition lately printed, set forth in the "Book of Discipline and Advices" of our Yearly Meeting:* and it forms a prominent feature in one of the Tracts published by the Tract Association in Dublin. I trust the time is near at hand when we shall be prepared fully and officially to repudiate this mischevous dogma, so derogatory to the word of God."

Such is the language of this new antagonist, still holding membership with Friends, and printing his views "*for private circulation only*," respecting a well-trying exponent of their well-trying principles. And, by the former of the two paragraphs above quoted, he thinks he has discovered and proved the existence of "a direct contradiction" in Barclay's Proposition on the Scriptures. But let us examine the matter a little, and I think we shall see, how *superficially* at least, he has read him, in coming to that conclusion. In the section thus extracted from, Robt. Barclay says:—"We have shown what service and use the Holy Scriptures, as managed in and by the Spirit, are of to the Church of God; wherefore we do account them a secondary rule. Moreover because they are commonly acknowledged by all to have been written by the dictates of the Holy Spirit, and that the errors which may be supposed by the injury of times to have slipped in, are not such but that there is a sufficient, clear testimony left to all the essentials of the Christian faith; we do look upon them as the only fit outward judge of controversies

* The Yearly Meeting of Dublin.

among Christians; and that whatever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore justly be rejected as false. And, for our parts, we are very willing that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them; which we never refused, nor ever shall, in all controversies with our adversaries as the judge and test. We shall also be very willing to admit it as a positive certain maxim, *that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil.* For as we never lay claim to the Spirit's leadings, that we may cover ourselves in anything that is evil; so we know that as every evil contradicts the Scriptures, so it doth also the Spirit in the first place, from which the Scriptures came, and whose motions can never contradict one another, though they may appear to be sometimes contradictory to the blind eye of the natural man, as Paul and James seem to contradict one another."

Now, I affirm, that when candidly read, there is in this admission and declaration of Robt. Barclay's, clearly no *contradiction*, either direct or indirect to his previous statement,—that "the Scriptures are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit;" but it is the same as if he had said,—so fully do we esteem them such, and consequently as the *only fit outward* judge of controversies among Christians;—and having learned by experience such confidence in the Lord, in the sufficiency of his Light and grace, and in the blessed teachings of his Holy Spirit revealed within us,—*we are very willing* that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them; knowing, also, by a sure evidence, that the truths therein recorded are the fruit and product of the same Holy Spirit in the minds of those who wrote them.

There is no force at all in Thos. Bewley's argument, "If we allow 'that all our doctrines be tried by the Scriptures,'

then they are the ultimate test and *primary*;" for this would deny the existence of a test which should satisfy their consciences, to the holy men of old, who were without the Scriptures; and that which *corroborates*, as by an outward testimony, the inward persuasions of the Holy Spirit, is not on this account *superior* or *primary*.

The Author next takes credit to himself for "exposing and refuting this grave error of Barclay," rather than allow it, (as some would think "*more judicious*") "quietly to drop out of sight;" and says also "*there are now comparatively but few prepared to defend it.*" If this last be true, more indeed is the pity, and grievous the loss we have sustained as a people, of advocates for truth. We are, in my apprehension, in a lean and scattered state, if we cannot go with Barclay in this particular, and are strayed from the place appointed us, even the good pasture of the flock, into a dry and weary land.

If we do not know the good Spirit of the Lord, to be the Rule of life and conduct to our souls; the author, sustainer, and finisher of our faith,—an experience which is the main stress of Barclay's argument;—then are we brought to a loss indeed. For the Scriptures, good as they are from beginning to end, are as a sealed book, until we have been first anointed, moved upon, and enabled to receive them to our learning and to our comfort, by the Light and Spirit of God.

Thos. Bewley describes as a "grave and pernicious error," this relative placing of the Scriptures as a rule subordinate to the Spirit; and "trusts that the time is near at hand when we shall be prepared fully and *officially* to repudiate it."

Now it is worthy of note, and I hope will receive his own serious consideration, that notwithstanding all he has had to say about the "*injurious effect*," and "*pernicious*"

tendency of this "*mischievous dogma*," as he is pleased to call it, he has not proved it in any wise, by any disastrous facts or circumstances traceable thereto. And it remains for him to shew where are the persons, either now living amongst us, or in the records of our past history as a people, who have suffered spiritual loss and damage by duly esteeming the Spirit of Truth as their primary, and the Scriptures of Truth as a secondary rule, subordinate thereto, in the conduct of life? I verily think, it cannot be done. But on the other hand, it would be easy to shew, by multiplied instances from age to age, how richly those have profited in christian experience, in substance and in fruit, whose lives have been yielded to so holy a guidance.

In the beginning however, and also at the end of his treatise, T. B. has mentioned Hicksism, as if with the view of casting the onus of that great schism and departure from the Truth upon this particular form of doctrine; but this, if so intended by him, is evidently done by imputation and by inference only. The quotation given on pages 3, and 4, from one of E. Hicks' sermons, can be matched with nothing from the well guarded writings of either Robt. Barclay, or any other faithful Friend, in its self-satisfied tenor and tone. Many have laboured by insinuation, what they cannot do by proof, to trace a natural connection between the vain imaginations and sceptical opinions of Elias Hicks, and the solid, evangelical, spiritual doctrines of Friends. There is really no more connection between them, than there was between the Arians of old, and the faithful Apostles and Disciples of Christ.

But if I am not mistaken as to what are the portents and signs of the times; the pestilence of unbelief to which, as a people, we are now more immediately and extensively exposed, is not of an Arian, but of an Antinomian kind,

in a profession of being saved and justified by Christ, while yet remaining in a sinful state.

And both forms of error, if permitted to creep in, are alike in this,—that they bewilder and betray from the saving Light of Christ, from the healing virtue of the Gospel; from the Spirit of love, and from the power of godliness, which will ever mark the faithful-hearted followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX.

The attention of the reader of the foregoing treatise, is further invited to the following testimonies taken from the writings of Friends, in confirmation of the extract from Barclay's Apology, which has been so much objected to by Thomas Bewley:—that “in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established.”

GEORGE FOX says:—

“And the Lord saith, ‘I will put my laws in your minds, and write them in your hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying—know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least of them, to the greatest of them.’ And is not this Law and New Covenant a sufficient Rule to know God by? And was not the Holy Ghost a sufficient Rule, that led Moses and the Prophets to give forth the Scriptures? And was not the Holy Ghost a sufficient Rule, that led the disciples and apostles of Jesus Christ into all truth, and to see the fulfilling of the law and prophets in Christ, and brought to their memories the words that Christ spoke, and afterwards to record them? And is not the same Holy Ghost, a sufficient Rule for *Christians* now to know God, and Christ, and the Scriptures, and lead them all into the truth of them? Which Holy Ghost they must pray in, and have their fellowship, seeing no man knows the things of God without the Spirit of God, which searcheth all things; and they are spiritually discerned, and the natural man perceives them not; they are foolishness to him; and how can they be his rule, when they are foolishness to him?”

"Now come all ye priests and professors in Christendom, and try yourselves by the Scripture, which you say is your rule; how dare you speak anything to make people obedient in word or deed, [Rom. xv. 18.] that Christ hath not wrought in you, or by you? Are not you boasting of other men's lines and labours, that other men have made ready for your hands?"

"And the Apostle saith, in Rom. viii. 1, 2. 'Now there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.' Now is not this Spirit a sufficient Rule to walk by? But you that say it is not the rule, do not you remain under condemnation, under the law of sin and death, pleading for it, and not for freedom by the law of the Spirit of life, on this side the grave?"

"And in 2 Cor. v. the apostle says:—'For we walk by faith and not by sight?' [mark, not by sight.] The church was not to walk by sight, but by faith, which Christ is the author of: and is not this sufficient? And those who walk by faith, they walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, even his faith, *which was before Scriptures were written*. And is this not a sufficient Rule for all the faithful, which is testified of in the Scripture, and was before Scripture was written? And which Scripture is to be believed, and fulfilled and practised."

"Concerning the Rule." Book of Doctrinals, pages 547-550.

WILLIAM PENN says:—

"The Scripture cannot be THE rule of faith, because it cannot give faith, for faith is the *gift of God, which overcomes the world*: neither of practice; because it cannot distinguish of itself in all cases, what ought to be practised, and what not; since it contains as well what ought not to be practised, as what ought. This was the case of Christ's disciples, who had no particular rule in the Old Testament writings, for the abolishing of some part of the Old Testament religion. What then guided them in their declaring void, and relinquishing those things? For instance, God gave circumcision *as a sign for ever*: and Paul tells the Galatians, *that if they be circumcised, Christ should profit them nothing?* Was not this the Spirit of Truth, that leads into all truth, that the apostles made the Judge and Rule of their doctrine and practices? So said James and the assembly of the apostles, when they told the believers '*It seemed good to the Holy*

Ghost and to us' &c." * * * * * "These very men that say (of the Scripture) *it is the rule of faith and life*, deviate in their proof from their assertion, for the Scriptures nowhere say so of themselves. Here, they fly to meanings and interpretations: the question arises not about the truth of the text, for that is agreed on all hands; but the exposition of it. If then I yield to that man, do I bow to the letter of the text, or to his interpretation? If the latter, as manifestly I do, is the Scripture or *that man's sense* of it *my rule*? Nay, the person so interpreting makes not the Scriptures *his* rule, but his own apprehension, whatever he may say to gain credit to his conceptions with others."

"How (then) shall I be assured that these Scriptures came from God? I am bound to try all things; if all things, then them amongst the rest. I would fain know what I must try them with?—With the Scriptures? Then the Scriptures must be the rule of my examination and faith concerning themselves; which is improper. If with the Spirit that gave them forth, which searcheth the deep things of God, (a measure of which is given to me to profit withal) then it is most congruous to call the Spirit, by way of excellency, and not the Scriptures,—THE RULE."

"The law outward, as a rule, was but as *Moses till the Son* came. '*The Servant abideth not in the house for ever.*' The written law held its place but till the inward arose in *more glory and brightness*; or rather till people became more capable of being turned to it, and living with and in it. '*In those days*, saith the Lord, I will write my Law in their hearts, &c.'—They who say otherwise of Scripture, do pervert and abuse it; for there is nothing more clearly laid down in it, from beginning to end, *than the Rule and Reign of the Spirit.*"

"Christ left nothing in writing for *the rule of faith and practice*, that we hear of; and it is not to be thought that he was less faithful in *his house*, than *Moses*. And doubtless, had he intended the rule of his followers to have been a *written rule*, he would have left it upon record with all punctuality,—*this* must be believed, and *that done*, on pain of eternal death. Nor did his followers write in the *method of a rule*, as the law was written; nor did they so call or recommend what they wrote."

"A rule, and THE rule, are two things. By THE rule of faith and practice, I understand,—*the living, spiritual, immediate, omnipresent, discovering, ordering Spirit of God.* And by A rule,—I apprehend some *instrument*, by and through which this *great and universal rule*

may convey its directions. Such a *subordinate, secondary, and declaratory rule*, we never said several parts of Scripture were not. Yet we confess, the reason of our obedience, is not merely because they are there written, (for that were *legal*,) but because they are the *eternal precepts of the Spirit* in men's consciences, *there* repeated and declared. It is the *testimony of the Spirit* which is THE TRUE RULE, for believing and understanding of the Scripture; therefore not the Scripture, but the *Spirit of Truth* must be THE Rule for our believing and understanding them. Thus held the Ancients."

From Penn's Works: Ed. 1726.—In "A Discourse of the General Rule of Faith and Practice; and Judge of Controversy:" which is found at length, Vol I., pages 591-606.

Again, in "An answer to a false and foolish Libel," Vol. II, page 669, WILLIAM PENN says:—

"Moses is taken on all hands to have been the first penman of sacred story, and that we cannot rise higher than his time for Scripture, consequently then the Scripture must take date. But who will deny that *Abel* had a rule to worship God by; *Enoch* to walk with God by; *Noah* to preach by; *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, to believe by? If they had none, say so; if they had, what was it, if not the *Spirit of truth and holiness*, that strove with the old world, but was resisted? And if the Spirit of God was the Rule of faith, worship, and practice, then, have we got another rule in the room of it now? No such matter: those that loved and feared God in all ages, were ruled and guided by the Spirit of God: and though many helps have been afforded men by the Father of mercies and lights, yet still the Spirit of Truth is THE GREAT RULE in and through them all. This is the Rule of all rules, as God is the light of all lights; yea, this is that Rule of the new creature; for the walking of the true Christian is in and after the Spirit; yea, 'tis the mark of being a child of God, to be led and guided by the Spirit of God; this is the Scriptures' testimony. The argument is plain, and altogether unanswerable; *that which is to lead Christians is to rule Christians*. But the Spirit of Truth is to lead Christians: consequently the Spirit of Truth is to rule Christians. So that to deny that the Spirit of Truth is the guide and rule of Christians, is to gainsay the testimony of Scripture, and the very tenour and nature of the second new and everlasting covenant of life and salvation; for in that state the law is writ in the heart, and the fear and Spirit put in the inward part; and what for, if not to rule and guide the soul in the path of life?"

“To conclude: as the Spirit of Truth revealed to the prophets things to come, and was a rule to them in discerning, receiving, declaring, and writing those things,—so is the same Spirit of Truth the Rule and Guide to all God’s people in their reading and understanding of them now written: and blessed are they that read with a good understanding.”

“And that the simplicity of none may be abused, we declare as we have frequently done, that the Scriptures of Truth were given forth by the holy men of God, as they were moved by the Spirit of God: and that they are *a rule*, yea, an excellent *rule*, for *instruction, reproof, and doctrine*, and all true Christians ought to embrace and practice the *holy mind and will of God*, thereby declared.”

ISAAC PENINGTON says:—

“Time was, when we also did believe that the Scriptures were the only *rule of faith and practice*; and so bent ourselves to search out and observe what we found written therein, hoping thereby to have attained to that, which our souls desired after. But we found all the directions thereof weak as to us, through the flesh, and sin had still power over us; and we knew not what it was to be made free by the Son; free by the truth; free indeed from that which stood near to tempt and draw us into sin. But when the light of God’s Holy Spirit shined upon us, and our minds were by him turned thereto, and his law written on our hearts, in and by the new covenant, which he revealed in us, and made with us, in and through his Son; then we felt the ministration of the power of the endless life, and were experimentally assured, that in the Gospel-administration which is an administration of the Spirit and power, nothing less than Spirit and power can be the Rule.”

In the old covenant, letter (or outward directions) was a rule; but the living commandment, or Word in the heart, is the Rule in the new covenant; living laws; laws livingly written; laws that give life to them in whom they are written; *they* are the living, powerful, and effectual Rule.

Nor do we undervalue the Scriptures, in thus giving honour to Christ and his Spirit; for it is their honour to testify of Christ and of his Spirit, who is the pure, certain, and infallible Rule of the new life, and who gives to fulfil all the holy directions, which are written in the Scriptures concerning the way of life.

A man, at a distance, may easily speak uncertainly; but let a man be joined to God’s Spirit, and feel His holy nature, movings, leadings,

and guidings he cannot but acknowledge them to be his certain and infallible Rule; for nothing is more certain than God's Spirit, than the Holy Anointing which is Truth and no lie, *and leads into all truth, and out of every lie and deceit.*"

From "Life and Immortality brought to light, &c.." Chap. xxii.

RICHARD CLARIDGE says:—

"R. C. asked him, what was the prime rule and judge of matters in religion?

"The Hungarian answered, the Scriptures.

"R. C. replied, that was the prime rule and judge of matters in religion, which was certain and infallible, and was the rule and guide of the saints in all ages, even before the Scriptures were written; and that was the Spirit, and the immediate teachings thereof. *Richard Claridge* also signified to him, that he had a high esteem of the Holy Scriptures, because they were given forth by *inspiration of God*, and were able to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ; and did own them to be a rule in their place, that is, an inferior or secondary rule; but the Spirit from whence they derived their authority, was, and is THE SUPERIOR OR PRIMARY RULE."

Life of Claridge, 1836, Ed., pages 52-59. See the conversation at length.

EDWARD BURROUGH says:—

"The Word of God was in the beginning, before any creatures were made, and by it all things stand and remain unto this day. The Word endures for ever, and by it all things in heaven and in earth are brought to pass which God doth. It is from everlasting to everlasting without beginning and without end. It is powerful, dividing, and discerning all things, even the secret thoughts of every man's heart. It is as a two-edged sword, and as a fire, and like a hammer, to cut up, to burn, and to beat down. The Word of the Lord reconciles man again to him, and this Word is in the mouth and in the heart. The servants of the Lord, handled, tasted, saw, and felt the Word of Life, and from it spoke forth the Scriptures. They are a declaration of the Word of Life, which was in the beginning and endures for ever, and declare what the saints received, believed, and enjoyed. None can understand without the same Spirit that gave them forth; and to such who have the same Spirit, the Scripture is profitable."

Memoir, Ed. 1851, page 214, "Concerning the Word of God, and concerning the Scriptures."

Again, page 306:—

“The Scriptures are a true declaraton, given forth from the Spirit of God, by holy men of God, moved by it to write them, and are profitable: BUT ARE NOT THE FOUNDATION, nor the most perfect rule of faith and life to the saints.”

PATRICK LIVINGSTONE says:—

“Some may object, saying: Is not the Scripture of Truth the Word of God?

Answer. The Scriptures of Truth are writings of truth, things or testimonies written concerning the Truth. Now there is an inward writing as well as an outward writing; so that is as much as to say Scripture written without, and Scripture written within—the Word of God within, and the Words of God without, written in the book, the Bible.”

Life and Writings ; Page 85.

See also a copious treatise by the same author, pages 343-395, and entitled

“A true and faithful testimony to the Word of Life, the true, perfect, and complete Rule of faith and obedience; and a plain discovery of them who say the Scripture is the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and obedience; wherein it is shewn and proved that neither the Word of Life is their rule, nor the Scripture is their rule, but that they follow their own spirit; and also, some things of their Confession of Faith,* considered.”

In conclusion, and in close accordance with these, the testimonies of Friends who were contemporary with Barclay, on the points controverted,—may now be added the following; the faithful, and admonitory language of the late far-seeing JOHN WILBUR; which was written, and first published in 1832.

“As it regards the ways and means by which God, through Jesus Christ, has revealed his will in former times, or at least, as respects the adaptation of those ways and means to the minds of men in the present day, there appears to be a great difference of opinion between us as a people and other professing Christians—which difference, Robert

* Commonly called the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Barclay, in his Apology for the true Christian divinity, has set forth in a clear, cogent, and scriptural manner. He has in that work answered the great question, whether that principle which contains the light, grace, spirit, and faith of the Gospel, is the first and best leader and controller of the Christian's life and practice—or, [whether] the Bible [is so;] and he has fairly made the Bible to decide this question itself. None need do more than simply quote all the passages from the Scripture which speak in favour of both these positions, and there will certainly be found a great preponderance in favour of the ground taken by our Early Friends, and taken also by the Apostles, in following the directions of our Lord, as to the guidance of his Spirit, and its operation upon men's hearts. And I would indeed that all who have any doubts upon this point—might first read the New Testament carefully through with candour, and an eye to the subject, and then examine Robert Barclay's proposition on the same subject, when the coincidence will be readily seen.

Christ the Lord, is the minister and leader of his people, (others as well as ministers,) for they do believe the truth of his gracious words, that he *is with them*, and dwelleth in them, and girdeth them, and bringeth all things to their remembrance; and they know him and his words, which he spake in the days of his flesh, to be unequivocal and true, and not feigned words, or vain pretensions. They know too, by blessed experience, that their faith in him their leader, is a practical and living principle—that it is not a mere theory; and they find this living experience confirmed to them by literal testimonies from the Scriptures. Hence they are enabled livingly to believe the Scriptures, and to assign them their proper place; or rather to allow them to take their own station and allotment in the blessed schedule of God's providence, declaring themselves to be “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,” and that *through faith* they are able to make us wise unto salvation; where too, he has also placed them, and where they acknowledge themselves to have been placed. Hereby those who attempt to put them in the place of the immediate and life-giving instruction of the Spirit of Christ, are not true and genuine believers, of the full, fair, and irrefragable testimony of the Holy Scriptures, as it relates to the question before us. In making a comparison of the blessed Spirit of the Gospel, with the Scriptures of truth, there is nothing lost to them; for placing it above them is no diminution of their excellency, nor of their character; nor can there be any dishonour brought to the Sacred Writings, by

placing the all-manifesting Spirit, Light, and Grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, over and above them in the rightful order of God's manifestations and provisions for the children of men.

If we compare the Scriptures with the writings of our Early Friends, there will be nothing lost to the latter by placing the former above them, and in the higher sphere of that exalted rank, where they do deservedly, and ever ought to stand, far above all modern writings, for several considerations which are well defined by Robert Barclay.

Now, therefore, as the Scriptures are true and authentic in word and doctrine, and stand above all other writings, we may fully admit them to be the only outward, fit rule and standard by which all the professors of Christianity may prove and try their doctrines; and more especially where *that Spirit* which trieth the spirits is not so well known and understood. This outward test being then generally agreed to by all, is a treasure of inestimable value, and the more so, because it instructs them of the purchase of their redemption, and emphatically directs all to the light and grace of God, through the Gospel; which are the very things that our fore-fathers, and we as a people, have insisted on.

The subject before us, is one of deep importance, (even the right assignment of the place of the Holy Scriptures,) when we contemplate the great consequences which await the retaining or abandonment of apostolic ground; the ground taken by our predecessors in profession, and which they supported with regard to the comparative rank of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and the Scriptures; for it would not require much foresight and sagacity to see, that if we as a people were to change the place of the Scriptures, and exalt them above, and put them in the place of the teaching of the Spirit of Christ, that it must inevitably, and that before long, completely overturn and change our ancient faith and practice, concerning both Silent Worship, and the need there is of a continually renewed qualification in a Gospel minister: two very prominent and important doctrines of the Christian religion. They are indeed the true doctrines of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and they had been virtually witnessed by the real worshippers and faithful messengers in all the previous ages of the World, who waited, spoke, and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The knowledge and true experience of these doctrines had been very much lost, even since the more refulgent dawning of Gospel light upon the sons of men, until they were proclaimed, and the true standard was again raised and supported through much pain and

suffering, by George Fox and his contemporaries; and the same doctrines continue to be acknowledged by their successors in faith down to the present day. Yet it is lamentable that these doctrines remain to be peculiar to the Society of Friends, and that they only (it is believed) as a body, are found experimentally and livingly to teach and practise them.

Inasmuch then as men, by silently waiting upon God, may happily attain strength and instruction, so, they can hereby do more towards pulling down the strongholds of sin and Satan; therefore his enmity is the more excited, and his cunning the more exercised to allure them from this blessed ground; for finding his attempts to drive them by violence from the Truth, to be in vain, he now very insiduously resorts to art and intrigue; he is very plausible with them, seeking if he can, to relax their direct hold upon God, and their dependance singly on him. He asks but small concessions at once, and admits something that shall very nearly resemble the right thing, and yet not be the thing itself; he gives it a good name, alleging its necessity, and extolling its advantages. And however the Adversary hates the Holy Scriptures, and would induce men to disbelieve them altogether, still, when he cannot effect this purpose, it is like himself to exalt them in name, even above their right order and true standing, that so he may dishonour Christ; hence he would place the Scriptures instead of, or before the instructions of Christ's Spirit, casting a shade of darkness over men's minds, and over the true faith of the Gospel, subtly suggesting the impracticability of a direct leading of the Holy Spirit, and thus inducing ministers to abandon that flesh-paining exercise of waiting for the promise of the Father, and setting them to work, to preach the letter only, instead of Christ Jesus in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. Hence by degrees, he would in time, so thoroughly change and remove this holy ground of our standing, that it might finally be abandoned altogether; which must indeed unavoidably be the case if we misplace the Scriptures, (as some other professors do,) by putting them as our instructor *before* the Spirit: then would *our* worship, *our* ministry, and *our* forms, become like theirs!"

From "Letters to George Crosfield:" No. v.

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**A BRIEF REPLY TO THOMAS BEWLEY'S PAMPHLET,
ENTITLED
"AN INQUIRY INTO THE RIGHT PLACE & AUTHORITY
OF HOLY SCRIPTURE."**

BY DANIEL PICKARD.

JOHN BELLOWES, WESTGATE STREET, GLOUCESTER.

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